

Message Text

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ACTION PM-07

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 EA-11 NEA-14 IO-14 ISO-00 SS-20

NSC-07 SP-03 L-03 H-03 CIAE-00 INR-11 NSAE-00 RSC-01

DODE-00 PRS-01 SAM-01 SAJ-01 ACDA-19 OMB-01 DRC-01

AID-20 /174 W

----- 021292

R 220536Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3394

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY SAN

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

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AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
USLO PEKING
US MISSION NATO 037
US MISSION GENEVA 1278
US MISSION USUN NEW YORK 1685
AMCONSUL BOMBAY
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMCONSUL MADRAS
CINCPAC

S E C R E T NEW DELHI 11114

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR, IN, US
SUBJECT: DOUBTS ON DIEGO

1. FROM THE TIME THE DIEGO GARCIA PLAN LEAKED TO THE PRESS LAST WINTER AND THE NEW DELHI EMBASSY WAS ACCORDINGLY APPRISED OF THE MATTER, WE HAVE CARRIED THE BRUNT OF THE DEFENSIVE EFFORT OVERSEAS. AS SOME WILL RECALL, I ALMOST GOT MY ASS THROWN OUT OF INDIA FOR TRYING TO MAKE OUR CASE TO THE MADRAS PRESS CORPS. INDIA, AS INCOMPARABLY THE LARGEST COUNTRY AROUND HERE, AS ONE PATHOLOGICALLY SUSPICIOUS OF AMERICAN MILITARY INTENTIONS, AND AS THE COUNTRY WHOSE NAME IS ATTACHED TO THE OCEAN, HAS NATURALLY BEEN THE LOCUS OF ASIAN OPPOSITION. I HAVE WORKED HARD TO PERSUADE THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS HERE NOT TO MAKE THIS A BILATERAL ISSUE BETWEEN INDIA AND THE UNITED STATES. ONLY LAST WEEK IN PARLIAMENT HE DECLARED THAT HE WOULD NOT DO SO, POINTING TO THE THIRTY-ODD OTHER NATIONS ALSO CONCERNED. IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, IF I AM NOT MISTAKEN, THE ONE CONSISTENT SPOKESMAN FOR THE PENTAGON PLAN IS THE ONE--AND ONLY--CONGRESSMAN TO VISIT NEW DELHI DURING MY TENURE. NO LESS A DEPARTMENTAL JOURNAL THAN "OPEN FORUM" FEATURED AS THE LEAD ARTICLE OF ITS FIRST ISSUE A PATRIOTIC DECLAMATION BY ME ON BEHALF OF A STRONG NAVY. I NOT ONLY WRITE SUCH THINGS, I BELIEVE THEM.

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2. FURTHER, THIS EMBASSY HAS SOUGHT, BY CABLES SUCH AS THIS ONE, TO STIMULATE THINKING ABOUT HOW WE CAN BEST MAKE OUR CASE--WHAT THE BEST CASE IS--IN THE THIRTY-ODD CAPITALS CONCERNED. WE HAVE FELT, AND WE HAVE BEEN RIGHT, THAT WASHINGTON HAS HAD A DEFEATIST ATTITUDE IN THIS MATTER, A POST-VIETNAM COLLAPSE OF CONFIDENCE IN OUR ABILITY TO WIN SUPPORT FROM ANY ASIAN NATION WHICH WE DO NOT OCCUPY MILITARILY. "FAINT HEART NE'ER WON FAIR FERROZABAD," WE HAVE CRIED, ASKING WHAT FARRAGUT

WOULD LEAD OUR PENNANTED AND INDOMITABLE IRONCLADS INTO THE SHOT AND SHELL OF ASIAN INTRIGUE.

3. WITHALL, WE BEGIN TO WAVER. FIRST CAME THE TESTIMONY BY THE DIRECTOR OF THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY WHICH SUBSTANTIALLY ENDORSED THE INITIAL ACADEMIC CRITICISM OF THE MOVE, STATING THAT FAR FROM KEEPING THE RUSSIANS OUT OF THE INDIAN OCEAN, DIEGO GARCIA WOULD DRAW THEM IN. IF THEY COME IN OF THEIR OWN ACCORD ONCE WE GET THE CANAL OPEN, WE REMAIN FREE TO REACT TO THEM, RATHER THAN LEAVING IT FOR THEM TO REACT TO US.

4. NOW, FEATURED IN ALL THE INDIAN PRESS--AS WAS THE TESTIMONY OF DIRECTOR COLBY--IS THAT OF GOVERNOR HARRIMAN WHO HAS TOLD THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE THAT IT WOULD BE SHEER "FOLLY" TO EXPAND DIEGO GARCIA WITHOUT FIRST HAVING TRIED TO NEGOTIATE AN AGREEMENT WITH THE SOVIETS TO BAR OR DIMINISH MILITARY ACTIVITY IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. I WORKED FOR GOVERNOR HARRIMAN FOR MANY YEARS, AND I HAVE A PERHAPS SPECIAL REGARD FOR HIS SENSE OF THESE MATTERS. BUT THE MORE IMPORTANT FACT IS THAT HIS IS MERELY THE MOST RECENT OF A SERIES OF WELL INFORMED STATEMENTS FROM MEN OF PRUDENT REPUTATION WHO ASK THAT WE HOLD OFF A BIT. THESE STATEMENTS ARE, OF COURSE, WIDELY PUBLICIZED IN INDIA AND, I SHOULD THINK, ASIA.

5. NOW COMES THE FURTHER REPORT FROM WASHINGTON THAT CHAIRMAN FULBRIGHT HAS EXPRESSED HIS GRAVE DOUBTS ABOUT THE UNDERTAKING. THIS WOULD MEAN THAT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE DEALING WITH SOUTH ASIA, LEE HAMILTON, HAVE BOTH EXPRESSED THEIR OPPOSITION TO THIS MOVE BY THE MILITARY. AS A SUPPORTER OF THE AMERICAN MILITARY, IT WOULD SEEM TO ME THAT A PRUDENT RESPECT FOR THE FOREIGN POLICY SECRET

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COMMITTEES OF THE CONGRESS NOW ORDAINS AT VERY LEAST A RECONSIDERATION OF THIS MOVE.

6. WHY NOT? THE PRESIDENT HAS MADE CLEAR THAT HE DOES NOT MEAN TO CUT BACK ON AMERICAN DEFENSE. BUT DIEGO GARCIA IS SEEN IN ASIA AS ESSENTIALLY AN OFFENSIVE ACTION OR ONE DESIGNED ULTIMATELY TO SUPPORT OFFENSIVE ACTION. SINCE THE BUDGET HAS TO BE CUT SOMEWHERE, WHAT ABOUT HIS TINY CUT WHICH WOULD HAVE SUCH A LARGE SYMBOLIC IMPACT ON ASIA. OBVIOUSLY, IT SHOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY SOME EFFORT AT AGREEMENT WITH THE SOVIETS. IF A YEAR OR SO LATER SOVIET DEPLOYMENTS GROW, OUR APPROACHES TO THE SOVIETS ABORT, OR OTHER CONTINGENCIES ARISE, DIEGO GARCIA CAN RISE AGAIN FROM THE BRINY DEEP.

7. THE DEFENSE WE ARE NOW APPARENTLY PREPARED TO MAKE OF DIEGO GARCIA IS THAT IT PROVIDES AN ECONOMICALLY COST-EFFECTIVE WAY OF SUPPORTING PERIODIC US NAVAL DEPLOYMENTS INTO THE INDIAN OCEAN. I WON'T ARGUE THAT. IT PROBABLY DOES. BUT POLITICALLY IT SEEMS TO ME IT IS NOT COST EFFECTIVE. COULD WE NOT THINK ABOUT SPENDING A FEW MILLION MORE, AS THE RUSSIANS DO, BUT PUTTING SOME ADDITIONAL SUPPORT SHIPS IN WITH OUR FLEET UNITS WHEN THEY ARE IN THE AREA? AT LEAST FOR NOW.
MOYNIHAN

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